Pesoli, Distt Pauri Garhwal has been disturbed for the last many years, as a result of which local residents are feeling inconvenient; and

(c) whether Government propose to take any action to regularise this facility so that people may avail advantages thereof; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The telephone No. 4627 in village Bara panchayat PCO was disconnected in February, 1999 due to non-payment. The outstanding dues against the said number upto December, 1998 was Rs. 455/-. Intimation to the Gram Pradhan was also sent to this effect in January, 1999 but nothing has been heard from him so far.

(c) Yes, Sir. Field unit has been advised to close and shift the PCO to a new location so that people may avail this facility.

Appointment of political persons as members of the constitution review committee

†*78. SHRI ONKAR SINGH LAKHAWAT: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Shri Venketachalliah, Chairman of the Commission/ Committee set up to review the Constitution has objected to the making of such persons as the members of the Committee who are linked to politics;

(b) whether Government doubt the ability, knowledge, honesty, impartiality and patriotism of such law experts who are linked to politics; and

(c) if not, what is Government's reaction to Shri Venkatachalliah's opinion?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (c) No Communication has been received from Shri Justice M.N.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Venkatachalliah, Chairperson of the "National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution", objecting to the making of such persons as members of the Commission who are linked to politics. In fact, the Members of the Commission have been selected with the knowledge and concurrence of Shri Justice M.N. Venkatachalliah.

Income tax on agricultural income

*79. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the agricultural sector has so far been kept out of the income tax net; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. However, agricultural income is aggregated with income other than agricultural income for determining the average rate of tax chargeable on income other than agricultural income.

Parliament has exclusive power under Article 246(1) of the Constitution of India to make laws in respect of matters enumerated in List I (Union List) in the Seventh Schedule. Entry 82 of the Union List reads "taxes on income other than agricultural income". Since Parliament can tax only income other than the agricultural income, the agricultural income has been kept out of income-tax net.

Import Duty on Edible Oil

*80. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the local market of edible oil and rice bran oil is suffering due to free import of oil from overseas market;

(b) what steps are being taken to increase the import duty on edible oil to protect the local manufacturers;